



1979

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER FIGHTER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING WING
U.S. PACIFIC FLEET
NAVAL AIR STATION MIRAMAR
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92145

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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Ser 588

18 APR 1980

From: Commander Fighter Airborne Early Warning Wing,
U. S. Pacific Fleet
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)
Subj: Command History (OPNAV Report 5750-1); submission of
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

1. In accordance with reference (a), the COMFITAEEWWINGPAC Command History for 1979 is hereby submitted.

R K Huisman
R. K. HUISMAN
Chief of Staff

Copy to:
CNO (OP-09B9)
CINCPACFLT
COMNAVAIRPAC



COMMANDER FIGHTER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING WING
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COMMAND HISTORY

1979

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BASIC HISTORY

The Commander Fighter Airborne Early Warning Wing, U. S. Pacific Fleet (COMFITAEEWWINGPAC) is headquartered at Naval Air Station Miramar, near San Diego, California.

It was originally established in July, 1965 as Commander Fleet Air Miramar, a functional commander of Pacific Fleet fighter units and as a subordinate of the Commander Naval Air Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet (COMNAVAIRPAC).

It was reorganized in July, 1973 to include the Airborne Early Warning (VAW) aircraft community. One of five Functional Wing Commanders of COMNAVAIRPAC, it was redesignated COMFIT-AEEWWINGPAC.

The missions of COMFITAEEWWINGPAC are: Indoctrination and training of fleet replacement aircrews and maintenance personnel for the Pacific Fleet's VF/VAW/VC communities; maintain the Pacific Fleet's VF/VAW/VC communities to their best operational readiness.

COMFITAEEWWINGPAC has 58 subordinate units which include: four carrier air wings; five fleet replacement squadrons; eight F-14 TOMCAT squadrons; four F-4 PHANTOM squadrons; six E-2 HAWKEYE squadrons; two A-4 SKYHAWK squadrons; the Navy Fighter Weapons School; a Guided Missile Unit; one Air Test and Evaluation squadron; four reserve squadrons; one Naval Air Station, and one Naval Air Facility.



Rear Admiral Paul T. Gillcrist, USN

17 May 79 - Present

Rear Admiral Paul T. Gillcrist entered the Naval Aviation College Program (V-5) in 1946 at Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington. He left the V-5 program in 1948 to accept an appointment to the U. S. Naval Academy. Graduating from the Academy in 1952, he reported for duty to Fighter Squadron 191 and deployed to the Western Pacific in USS ORISKANY (CVA-34).

Following a tour of duty as a Weapons Delivery Instructor at Fleet Air Gunnery Unit, Pacific, from 1955-1957, Rear Admiral Gillcrist was selected for U.S. Naval Test Pilot Training. Upon graduation in 1958, he served a tour as project test pilot in the Carrier Branch, Flight Test Division, Naval Air Test Center.

Rear Admiral Gillcrist deployed with Fighter Squadron 62 in USS LEXINGTON (CVA-16) during Cuban Contingency Operations in 1961; and in USS SHANGRI-LA (CVA-38) in the Mediterranean in 1963. He was selected for post graduate school in 1964 and received his Master's Degree at American University in 1965.

Rear Admiral Gillcrist served as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of Fighter Squadron 53 making deployments to the Tonkin Gulf in USS TICONDEROGA (CVA-14) in 1966; USS HANCOCK (CVA-19) in 1967 and USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31) in 1968.

Following a tour in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Rear Admiral Gillcrist was assigned as Commander Carrier Air Wing THREE and deployed to the Mediterranean in 1971 in USS SARATOGA (CVA-60).

Rear Admiral Gillcrist served as Director, Priorities Analysis Group for the Chief of Naval Operations in 1973. He was the Executive Assistant to the Under Secretary of the Navy in 1975.

From 1975 to 1977, Rear Admiral Gillcrist was the Commanding Officer, Naval Air Station, Cecil Field, Florida. Subsequently, he served as Assistant Chief of Staff (Current Operations), Commander in Chief, U. S. Atlantic Fleet from 1977 until 1979.

During his career, Rear Admiral Gillcrist has been awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), the Air Medal (thirteen awards), the Navy Commendation Medal, the Vietnamese Air Gallantry Cross and various campaign ribbons.

Rear Admiral Gillcrist is married to the former (b) (6) of (b) (6). They have four children, (b) (6), (b) (6), (b) (6), (b) (6).

Chronological Summary of Events 1979

January

5 COMFITAEEWING PAC Safety standown

February

USS RANGER (CVW-2), VF-21, VF-154, and VAW-117
deploy on WESTPAC

1 Command Inspection of VAW-112

8 Command Inspection of CVW-14

28 Command Inspection of VAW-113

March

USS AMERICA (CVW-11), VF-114, VF-213 and VFP-63 (DET-4)
deploy on WESTPAC

9 Command Inspection of VF-124

April

4 VX-4 begins first operational evaluation of
F-14A software tape 111C

5 USS RANGER w/CVW-2 embarked collides with oil
tanker, and then proceeds to Subic Bay for repairs

10 ADM Long, Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet
visits Miramar

18 Command Inspection of RFAW-110

30 VX-4 evaluates F-18 cockpit controls and displays

May

USS CONSTELLATION with CVW-9 embarked (VF-24,
VF-211, and VAW 126) VFP-63 (DET-3) returns from
WESTPAC

USS KITTY HAWK with CVW-15 embarked (VF-51, VF-111,
VAW-114 and VFP 63 (DET-1) deploys to WESTPAC

4 Command Inspection of VFP-63

17 COMFITAEEWING PAC change of command:
RADM Paul T. GILLCRIST relieved RADM Frederick G.
FELLOWES.

June

28 Command Inspection of VC-7

July

VX-4 Operational evaluation of F-4S completed.
Approval for service use is recommended.

August

22 Command Inspection of COMFITAEEWING PAC by
COMNAVAIRPAC

31 Command Inspection of VAW-116

September

USS RANGER with CVW-2 embarked (VF-21, VF-154,
and VAW 117) returns from WESTPAC

USS AMERICA with CVW-11 embarked (VF-114, VF-213
and VFP-63 (DET-4)) returns from WESTPAC

12 Command Inspection of VF-24

24 Command Inspection of VAW-115

24 Command Inspection of VF-151

24 Command Inspection of VF-161

October

12 COMFITAEEWING PAC staff headquarters moves from
building K-175 to building M-402

17 Command Inspection of VF-211

November

USS CORAL SEA with CVW-14 embarked (VAW-113 and
VFP-63 (DET-2)) deploys to WESTPAC

2 Command Inspection of VF-213

14 Command Inspection of VX-4

December

USS KITTY HAWK with CVW-15 embarked (VF-51, VF-111, VAW-114 and VFP-63 (DET-1)) due to return from WESTPAC, has cruise extended two months, until February 1980.

- 5 Command Inspection of VC-1
- 7 VF-21 receives Navy's first F-4S
- 7 ADM Thomas Hayward, Chief of Naval Operations, visits Navy Miramar
- 12 Command Inspection of VF-2.

Subordinate Units and Homeports

NAS Miramar, San Diego, CA

- NAS Miramar
- CVW-2 (USS RANGER)
- CVW-11 (USS AMERICA)
- CVW-14 (USS CORAL SEA)
- CVW-15 (USS KITTY HAWK)
- VF-121 F-4 FRS
- VF-124 F-14 FRS
- VF-126 A-4 FRS
- RVAW-110 E-2 FRS
- VFP-63 F-8 FRS
- NFWS F-5

VF-21	F-4	VC-7	A-4		
VF-154	F-4	VAW-112	E-2B		
VF-1	F-14	VAW-113	E-2B		
VF-2	F-14	VAW-114	E-2C		
VF-24	F-14	VAW-116	E-2B		
VF-211	F-14	VAW-117	E-2B		
VF-114	F-14				
VF-213	F-14	Reserves:			
VF-51	F-14	VF-301	F-4	VAW-88	E-2B
VF-111	F-14	VF-302	F-4	VC-13	A-4

NAF El Centro, CA

NAS Yokosuka, Japan (USS MIDWAY)

VF-151	F-4
VF-161	F-4
VAW-115	E-2B

NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii

VC-1	A-4
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NAS Pt. Mugu, CA

GMU-41	
VX-4	F-14/F-4

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT SUMMARY

- 24 Jan 79: A-4 experienced fire in flight. Pilot ejected and was uninjured; aircraft lost.
- 31 Jan 79: F-4 and TA-4 collided in midair during an ACM engagement. Both aircraft and the crewmen of the TA-4 were lost. F-4 crewmen safely ejected.
- 17 Feb 79: F-8 departed runway at NALF San Clemente. Aircraft sustained substantial damage; pilot unhurt.
- 19 Mar 79: F-14 experienced uncommanded throttle acceleration aboard USS America (CV-66). Aircraft hit catwalk and received substantial damage; crewmen ejected safely.
- 11 Apr 79: F-14 impacted power pole during low-level flight and was damaged. Aircraft landed safely with no injuries to crew.
- 01 Jun 79: F-4 experienced hydraulic failure with main landing gear stuck up. Crewmen ejected safely but aircraft lost.
- 08 Sep 79: F-14 lost due to engine fire after catapult launch. Crewmen ejected safely.
- 10 Sep 79: F-14 blew a tire after landing and departed runway. Crewmen ejected safely and aircraft received substantial damage.
- 12 Oct 79: F-14 entered a spin during ACM engagement. Aircraft lost but both crewmen ejected safely.
- 13 Oct 79: RF-8G impacted water during high speed, low altitude maneuvering. Aircraft and pilot lost.
- 28 Nov 79: F-14 RIO ejected during ACM and suffered fatal injuries. Pilot landed safely with substantial damage to aircraft.
- 18 Dec 79: F-4 impacted water on takeoff from NALF San Clemente. Both crewmen and aircraft lost.